



**USAID**  
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

**AFGHANISTAN**

## SNAPSHOT

# Merchants Offer Tea and Gratitude

**Shopkeepers are ensuring the safety of project laborers working in volatile communities within Kandahar City**



*Haji Gul Agha watches laborers outside his shop in Mirwais Mina, while they shovel the final remnants of sewage and trash from the street and ditches.*

Photo: RAMP-UP/FAF Development

***With continuous and reliable trash removal service during the past two months, residents are beginning to rely on the services from the municipal government.***

During the last week of May 2011, shopkeeper Mohammad Ewaz of Mullah Sher Akhund Ziarat, a community in District 8 of Kandahar City, was so happy with the work being accomplished by a USAID project, that he began offering tea to the project's labourers to show his gratitude. Examples such as this are being repeated across the city, demonstrating widespread support among residents for this solid waste management project funded by USAID.

"For many years this street was completely blocked by decades of garbage. Cars and motorbikes couldn't get through," said Ewaz. "Last month, municipal laborers came to clear the street. I was so happy that I offered to store their tools and made sure that they feel safe and comfortable in this dangerous part of the city." In another volatile area of Kandahar City, shopkeeper Haji Gul Agha offered a similar story: "People avoided my shop because there was so much garbage and sewage." The garbage and sewage have now been removed, and Agha is both elated and surprised that municipal laborers are providing services to his often neglected community on the outskirts of the city.

The visible presence of municipal services being provided in every district of Kandahar City is increasing the legitimacy of the municipal government. The project is coordinated with the city's municipal waste department and over time, the planning and administration of the project will be handed over to the municipal government, with appropriate mentoring and oversight to ensure its continued success, after the USAID project comes to an end.

USAID assists governments in urban centers to increase the capacity of municipal officials, improve the delivery of municipal services, support economic growth initiatives, and increase own-source revenues. USAID funds service delivery improvements and small-scale infrastructure projects such as road paving, parks, and solid waste management.